

NUMERAL PERFINs Bulletin 248/4; 249/13; 265/13.

DAVE HILL comments that in Bulletin 248 Pg.4, Michael Rucklidge thought the numerals 1-12 came from one die with changeable pins. In Bulletin 249, John Nelson confirmed they were perfins, and that he had them on GVI stamps up to the 2½d value with sideways wmk's. In Bulletin 265, John Mathews puts forward the theory that the numbers represent the twelve months of the year.

Dave Hill has a '4' on a GV ½d Block Cypher, which could make the earliest date 1924. Looking in the New Illustrated Catalogue many of these stamps are recorded used in Ipswich and many of the dates agree (or nearly) with this idea that the numbers stood for the months of the year.

None of this tells us the purpose of these numeral perfins.

Apart from the foregoing types, the identity of the users of only a few are still unknown. Perhaps members would have a look at these to see if anything occurs to them.

As regards the "why" of some of these dies, Dave knows the 1.2.3 of Gabbitas Thring is a pun, although ABC might have been more appropriate. Gabbitas Thring were, and are, an employment agency for teachers. (They got Betjeman his first job when he was sent down from Oxford - see "Summoned By Bells"). But why 129 for Uskside Engineering and 169 for Wallasey Corporation?

Sloper's Ledgers show many more numeral perfins than are known on stamps but the Sloper publicity letter quoted by Rosemary in Bulletin 263 Pg.17 explains this. As well as supplying postage stamps perforated with initials, they perforated Holiday with Pay and Holiday Credit stamps with registered numbers or initials; and National Insurance Stamps with a Government registration design.

This Government approval may have referred to approval of the original idea (See my article in Bulletin 263 Pg.8) and the registers may just have been Sloper's record of the allocation of the number or design; possibly in the order that the enquiries were received from the firms.

(Ed.- this is almost entirely word for word as received from Dave)